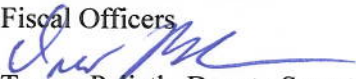
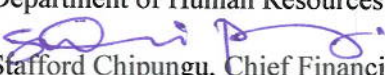


**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 WEST SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201**

DATE: July 29, 2015

POLICY#: SSA-CW #16-12

TO: Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Assistant Directors, Local Departments of Social Services
Chiefs of Foster Care and Adoption
Fiscal Officers

FROM: 
Tracey Paliath, Deputy Secretary of Programs
Department of Human Resources

Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer
Budget Management and Finance

RE: SFY 2016 Allocation for Adoption Promotion and Support Services

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Adoption and Foster Care

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Office of Child Welfare Practice and Policy
Social Services Administration

ACTION REQUIRED OF: Adoption Programs, Foster Care Programs, and Finance Officers

REQUIRED ACTION: Utilize, Monitor, and Report Quarterly on the Use of Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Funds for adoption promotion and support services.

ACTION DUE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Helene Hornum, Program Analyst
(410) 767- 7247
Helene.hornum@maryland.gov

PURPOSE:

This policy directive sets forth usage and reporting requirements for Adoption Promotion and Support Services funded through the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. DHR's budget office has already provided you with your allocations for FY 2016. The amount allocated to each local department was based on the number of children with plan of adoption, as reported by each local department of social services.

The federal money MUST be used for any adoption promotion and support services BEFORE using State General Funded Flex Funds, i.e. Super Flex Funds.

If one-half (1/2) of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 1, 2016, any remaining amount will be subject to reallocation to other local departments that are spending their Adoption Promotion funds. In addition, a local department that fails to submit their quarterly reports will risk reduction and reallocation of their Adoption Promotion funds to another local department.

The Adoption Promotion and Support Services funds continue to be linked to the forthcoming adoption goals and are **specifically geared to ensure that children with a goal of adoption are adopted. These funds can be spent on anything that would remove barriers to a finalized adoption or that would expedite the adoption process. When preparing the required action plans, the local departments should think about any one-time expenses that they may have during SFY 2016 that would promote a child's adoption. These one-time expenses need approval first from SSA and the Department of General Services (if over \$25,000) then from the federal government prior to the purchase being made.**

Adoption Promotion money should no longer be used to provide post-adoption services. With the passage of HB 683 on April 6, 2009, funding will continue for the Post-Adoption Support Services Program (see policy directive SSA #12-34 for more information).

ACTION PLAN:

Local departments must submit a fully detailed "action plan" for SFY 2016 **by September 25, 2015**. The plan must provide the local department of social services' contact name and phone number for monitoring purposes. **Failure to submit a plan by the established deadline will result in the total allocation for that local being withheld and redirected by the Social Services Administration to another jurisdiction.** The action plan must provide an adequate description of the planned expenditures based on the total allocation and the approximate number of families and children to be served. **In addition, the plan must tie-in with the adoption goals and justify how each proposed activity and/or service would help promote a child's adoption. Again, please think about any one-time expenses that you may have during the SFY 2016.** If the local plan cannot realistically utilize the total allocation, the plan should

clearly state the funding needs of the jurisdiction and identify any remaining amount that can be returned to the Social Services Administration.

For SFY 2016 a spending cap is being imposed on certain activities. No more than 20% of the total adoption promotion allocation can be spent on adoption celebrations. In addition, no more than 20% of the total allocation can be spent on training and conferences. Please specify in your action plan how the training and adoption celebrations help achieve your adoption goal.

Case Record Document

To ensure that funding is properly expended at the local level, each local department will be required to document in the child's case record steps taken to promptly implement permanency plans for children in out-of-home care. For children with a permanency plan of adoption or placement in another permanent family home, the local department must document what has been done to find an adoptive family or other permanent living arrangement for the child. The implementation of the permanency plan may include placement of a child with an adoptive family, a relative, or a legal guardian. The plan may also specify another planned permanent living arrangement and may indicate actions taken to finalize the adoption or legal guardianship. Documentation shall include clearly defined, child-specific recruitment efforts to locate a family for a hard-to-place child and a summary of services to a finalized adoptive family that supported and/or sustained an adoptive child in the family. This documentation must be available for Quality Assurance Site Reviews.

Requirements

Promoting Safe and Stable Families funds CANNOT be combined with other grants or merged into other flex fund accounts. A SEPARATE ACCOUNTING MUST BE MAINTAINED. The Department is required to report to the United States Department of Health and Human Services the amount of funds spent on EACH service of the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program.

The number of families and children served must be submitted quarterly on the attached Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Adoption Promotion and Support Services Quarterly Program Report form (page 5 of 6). The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled to the Monthly 302 Report to ensure that reported data is consistent.

On the attached Summary of Services form (page 6 of 6), each Quarterly Report must include a brief description of each activity charged to Adoption Promotion and Support Services, **and how these activities are helping to achieve the SFY 2016 adoption goals.** If the activity is a support or recruitment activity, the date(s) and attendance records must be included with the report. This program report must be submitted to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, Office of Child Welfare Practice and Policy, Social Services Administration. **As already stated, a local department that fails to submit these quarterly reports will risk their remaining allocation being reduced and reallocated to another local department.**

The report submission dates and periods covered are as follow:

Submission Dates

Periods Covered

October 16, 2015
January 15, 2016
April 15, 2016
July 15, 2016

July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015
October 1, 2015- December 31, 2015
January 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016
April 1, 2016– June 30, 2016

The allocation for SFY 2016 and all expenditures for services rendered between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016 must be liquidated (services provided and paid for) by June 30, 2016. The FMIS report and quarterly expenditure reporting will be used to monitor expenditures.

SSA will be closely monitoring the expenditures of each local department at the end of each quarter. As previously stated, if one-half (1/2) of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 1, 2016, the remaining funds may be reallocated to another local department that is spending their Adoption Promotion funds.

All contracts and purchase orders must follow COMAR Title 21 procurement regulations.

In order to track and report the use of these funds, please use the following charge codes:

- All child and family-specific expenses should be requested through the Chessie Service Log choosing Category Code **4140** for PSSF Adoption Promotion.
- Any charges that are not child and family-specific should use charge code PCA GC940, Project/Subproject number 0302.86, within the Child Welfare Services (n00g0003) program and the appropriate agency object for the purchase made.

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT for SFY 2016**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: _____
 July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015 _____ October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 _____ January 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016 _____
 April 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016 _____

Account Name	Account Number/ Project/Subproject/ Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Families Served Current Quarter	Children Served Current Quarter	Families Served Y-T-D	Children Served Y-T-D
Adoption Promotion and Support Services	GC940 0302.86 (non child and family-specific) 4140 (child and family-specific)							
Allocation								

Year-to-Date Expenditures _____
 Remaining Balance _____

Mail or Fax the Report to:
 Helene Hornum
 Social Services Administration
 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5th Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 Fax #: 410-333-6556

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORTS- SUMMARY OF SERVICES
SFY 2016**

Local Department: _____ Person Completing Form: _____
Phone Number: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Report Period:

July 1, 2015 - September 30, 2015 _____ October 1, 2015 - December 31, 2015 _____
January 1, 2016 - March 31, 2016 _____ April 1, 2016 - June 30, 2016 _____

Mail or Fax the Reports to: Helene Hornum, Social Services Administration, 311 W. Saratoga Street, Baltimore, MD 21201 Fax#: 410-333-6556

Describe the activities charged to Adoption Promotion and Support Services and **how they are helping achieve the Adoption Goals.**